

FAQ

Q. What is Kinship Care?

A. Kinship care is a program which provides cash assistance to relatives caring for children whose parents are absent or otherwise unable to provide care for their minor children. It was created in 1997 to replace assistance formerly available under Aid to Families with Dependent Children for children living with non-legally responsible relatives. Kinship Care is administered by the Department of Health & Family Services and at the local level, by county or tribal child protective services agencies. The money for the program comes from the state and federal government (TANF monies). The Child Support agency does recoup payment from the parents, in order to assist in funding for the program. Relatives, who qualify for the program, receive \$215/month/child in their home.

Currently the Manitowoc County Human Services Department serves 68 children in 44 relative homes. We often do need to implement a waiting list for the program due to limited funding. The Department is required to serve all court ordered placements (CHIPS) and those cases cannot be placed on the wait list.

Q. Can a family receive Kinship Care benefits if the child they are caring for is receiving SSI for their own disability?

A. No, a child cannot receive both benefits at the same time.

Q. Does the child automatically receive MA if the family is receiving Kinship Care benefits?

A. No, the family needs to apply for MA for the child at the Job Center. The children are not automatically placed on MA when they receive the Kinship Care benefit. Even if the child currently has MA, the relative needs to re-apply for MA if the child now has a new residence. Relatives can also apply for MA for children who are residing in their home, but do not receive Kinship Care, as they are on the wait list. Relatives are also encouraged to apply for WIC for those children who meet the age requirements. The key word is "apply" as there is no guarantee that they will qualify.

Q. How does a family apply for Kinship Care?

A. The family should call Cindy Schley at 683-4746 for an application and an explanation of the program. Then Cindy will send out the application and criminal background check forms. When funding is available, the family will need to participate in a home study to gather more information about the family and to once again determine if they are eligible for the program.